

now.”²⁴¹ Taylor himself acknowledges having told Fowler at the meeting that he would be willing to contribute more funds if it would help consideration of his tribe’s various concerns. Fowler does not recall that statement. No witness suggests that Fowler responded to it directly, except Taylor, who recalls Fowler’s saying that sometimes political contributions help, sometimes they do not, but that Fowler could promise nothing.²⁴²

As the meeting progressed, various lawyers and lobbyists for the opponent group added perspectives and information on IGRA and the Hudson case. Fowler recalls that someone voiced the allegation that the Hudson project was merely a bail-out for a failing dog track owned by Delaware North, a New York based corporation, and that Sen. D’Amato was pushing Interior to approve the application for that reason. The opponents added the assertion that Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Ada Deer was tainting the process with a pro-applicant bias, because of her past association with applicant leader gaiashkibos.

O’Connor recounted to Fowler his efforts to contact the White House through that date, including his unanswered calls to White House aide Loretta Avent and his subsequent contact with President Clinton and aides Bruce Lindsey and Linda Moore in Minneapolis earlier that week, and his exchange of calls with Ickes.²⁴³ O’Connor noted that he had then heard back from

²⁴¹Grand Jury Testimony of Carl Artman, Oct. 14, 1998, at 33 (hereinafter "Artman G.J. Test.").

²⁴²Mercer, who as the DNC Deputy Finance Director was responsible for staffing this meeting for Fowler and preparing any appropriate follow-up, recalls none of these various comments about financial contributions, or much of anything else discussed at the meeting. Kitto denied (and O’Connor could not recall) having made or heard any mention of contributions at the meeting.

²⁴³*See* Section II.E.4.b., *infra*.